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PATENT

Attorney Docket No. MLB-038

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANT(S): Christopher Turner et al.
SERIAL NO.: 08/820,057 GROUP NO.: 2673
FILING DATE: March 18, 1997 EXAMINER: David Lee Lewis
TITLE: PRINTABLE ELECTRONIC DISPLAY

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

REPLY BRIEF

(submitted with Corrected Appeal Brief)

This reply brief is submitted pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.193(b)(1) to correct an error in the originally submitted Appeal Brief, and to address, in a succinct fashion, a fundamental misreading of the present claims by the Examiner.

I. Correction to Main Appeal Brief

Appellant's primary brief contained incorrect versions of two drawings. The structure of the Saito reference is not as pictured; instead, as described in the text of the brief and as illustrated in the amendment filed on August 9, 2001, the Saito structure includes a nonlinear element located beneath one of the display electrodes that sandwich the display.

It is noted that the error did not affect the Examiner's Answer; indeed, the Examiner no longer relies on Saito.

In addition, a cleaner (although substantively identical) version of the drawing shown in connection with the Fujita reference is introduced in the corrected brief.

II. The Examiner's Assertion of Fujita is Based on a Fundamental Misreading of the Present Claims

The Examiner's Answer focuses his rejections squarely on Fujita, and in particular, on two arguments pertaining to this reference.

First, the Examiner acknowledges that Fujita is relevant solely because of the small portion of the nonlinear element that intervenes between the lower display electrode

and the display. Second, the Examiner contends that the nonlinear device is “electrically coupled to the two opposing [display] electrodes as claimed.”

We do not dispute the relevance of Fujita merely because it is just a small portion of the nonlinear element that intervenes between the electrodes. Rather, we submit that the overall construction of Fujita simply does not operate in the manner herein claimed, and that the benefits of the invention cannot be obtained in the manner Fujita discloses. In order to argue Fujita into relevance, the Examiner must flatly misread the terms of the present claims.

As previously explained, Fujita’s nonlinear device does not *electrically couple* the display electrodes. Instead, the nonlinear element couples a separate electrical element, a *bus bar*, to *one display electrode*. At col. 2, lines 13-16, Fujita specifies “an amorphous semiconductor layer which is formed between the [sic] each bus bar and each of the plurality of pixel electrodes so as to provide an electrical connection there-between.”

The Examiner does not dispute that this is Fujita’s arrangement. Instead, he misreads the plain language of the claims in order to argue that they cover both the inventors’ system as well as the very different system of Fujita.

As explained in the specification, the nonlinear element of the present invention “electrically couples” opposed electrodes in that a voltage applied across the electrodes will cause current to flow between the electrodes if the voltage exceeds the nonlinear device’s threshold. Unless both intersecting electrodes sandwiching a display element are energized, the voltage will not exceed that threshold, so very little current will flow be-

tween the electrodes; as a result, the display will not be activated inappropriately. (Specification at 11-12.)

Fujita, in contrast, utilizes a separate electrical element—the bus bar—to impart power to a single one of the display electrodes. Thus, Fujita’s nonlinear element does not control current between display electrodes. Rather, it controls current between this extra electrical element and one of the display electrodes. The Examiner understands this, but contends, in effect, that this arrangement is close enough: “Therefore electrical coupling occurs in series from the required applied voltage to the bus bar ... to the nonlinear device ... to the electrode ... to the second electrode.” (Answer at 6.) The Examiner concludes, “Fujita teaches of the nonlinear device being electrically coupled to the two opposing electrodes *as claimed*.” (Answer at 6; emphasis added.)

But in fact, the claims ***do not*** call for “the nonlinear device being electrically coupled to the two opposing electrodes.” That is manifestly not what the claims say. Instead, the claims require the nonlinear device to ***couple***—not merely to be ***coupled to*** in a series arrangement involving an extra electrical element—the two electrodes.

Only under the Examiner’s misreading of the present claims could Fujita’s approach be considered relevant. The entire purpose of the sandwiched nonlinear element in the present claims is to electrically couple the display electrodes in order to avoid spurious activation of the display. There is no need for electrical elements, such as Fujita’s bus bar, in addition to the two display electrodes. This simple and easily fabricated construction contrasts with both Fujita and Saito (which requires a synchronization line in

addition to two display electrodes). There is no need to establish electrical connections among different types of components *on the same layer*, as required by Fujita (as well as by Kazan).

III. Conclusion

We once again submit that the Examiner's rejections of claims 1-28 and 30-34 were erroneous, and reversal thereof is respectfully requested.

Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No. 20-0531.

Respectfully submitted,



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